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English 11

Pd. 3

There were many drugs used in the 1970’s in America. The bulk of these were newly introduced during this decade. One new drug during this decade was cocaine. Another drug, which is a relative of cocaine, which was crack, was also new. In addition was the biggest concern of the 1970’s which was heroin. Lastly is the widely known drug of cannabis, more commonly known as marijuana. Those were the biggest drugs used at this time in the American culture.

First, is for a newer drug during this time period which was cocaine. During this time period 80 to 90 percent of the cocaine brought into the northeastern US was handled by Colombia’s Cali cartel according to (Robert, 1993). Cocaine is a stimulant that energizes the user. Cocaine is a naturally occurring chemical in the class of alkaloids. Cocaine is used in the medicinal field when it is necessary although it is rarely. Cocaine is listed as a schedule II controlled substance today. The possible sentencings of possession or trafficking cocaine are as follows. Possession or trafficking with the intent to distribute 500 grams carries a mandatory minimum sentence of 5 years. Illegal production of five kilos or more carries a mandatory minimum of 10 years according to (Sterling, 2006).

Next, is for another newly introduced drug of this time period is crack. The major difference between crack and cocaine is that crack is rock and cocaine is a powder. There are many myths about crack and several according to (Sterling, 2006) are as follows. One myth is if you use crack once it can lead to instant addiction. Whereas according to the 2004 statistics from the National Household Survey on Drug Use and Health says that almost 8 million Americans have smoked crack cocaine during their lifetime and only less than a half a million have smoked crack in the last 30 days. Another big myth of crack is that it is a mostly African American drug and a plague in the Black community. This is not true according to (Sterling, 2006) 60% of the people whom have used crack in the last month are White. The misleading concept of this myth is that 80 % of the crack arrests in 2002 were African American users. When cocaine was first beginning to spread across America it was believed that it was not that harmful and if taken in moderate doses it probably didn’t cause any significant physical or mental damage and that it was safer than liquor and cigarettes. For sellers, crack was easy to make and desired by a lot of people for which powder cocaine had previously been expensive and hard to get. That is the basic facts of crack in the 1970’s according to (Sterling, 2006).

A drug that was not so new but was a bigger scare was heroin. Heroin is a highly addictive drug. Heroin is also one of the most widespread abused drugs still used today in America. Heroin hails from morphine which is a highly addictive drug mostly used for medicinal purposes. You can take heroin by injecting, smoking, and/or sniffing it. Although injections used to be the main form of heroin use it is now more commonly smoked or snorted due to people being afraid of sharing needles and getting AIDS or other deadly diseases. Heroin was a huge scare in the 1970’s but was replaced by the use of crack cocaine in the late 1970’s although heroin is still used in today’s society.

Now for the last of the drug’s used in the 1970’s is Cannabis also known as marijuana. There are many forms of the drug according to (Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., 2009) and they are as follows. Cannabis refers to the dried flowers, leaves, and stems of the cannabis plant. Another form, hashish, can be chewed as well as smoked. Another form of it is hash oil which is used in the process of making a variety of cannabis foods. Next is kief, kief can be consumed in powder form or it can be compressed to produce hashish. Lastly is resin which is the remains of the cannabis plant that have been burnt that are inside of the paraphernalia. Cannabis has a psychological effect on the user when consumed. Some studies have shown that moderate use of marijuana may protect against head, neck, and breast cancer. Studies have shown that tobacco smoking is a better predictor of trying harder drugs than smoking cannabis. That is how cannabis was used widely in the 1970’s according to (Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., 2009).

In conclusion, there were many drugs used in America in the 1970’s as well as many other decades. Drug use is a big part of society although most people won’t admit it in their everyday lives. One drug used in this decade was cocaine. Another drug that was used in this time was crack. Next is another big time drug used in this time frame which is heroin. Lastly is for the drug that has been one of the most widely used drugs since the beginning of history which is marijuana. Those are all of the drugs that were used in the decade of the 1970’s.